(i) The Sanskrit word ‘*Maitreya’* or its equivalent in *Pali* ‘*Metteyya’* means loving, compassionate, merciful and benevolent. It also means kindness and friendliness, sympathy, etc. One Arabic word which is equivalent to all these words is ‘*Rahmat*’. In Surah Al-Anbiya:

"We sent thee not, but as a mercy for all creatures." [Al-Qur’an 21:107]

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was called the merciful, which is ‘*Maitri’*.

(ii) The words Mercy and Merciful are mentioned in the Holy Qur’an no less than 409 times.

(iii) Every chapter of the Glorious Qur’an, except Chapter 9, i.e. Surah Taubah begins with the beautiful formula, '*Bismillah Hir-Rahman Nir-Rahim*', which means 'In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful'.

(iv) The Word Muhammad is also spelt as ‘*Mahamet’* or ‘*Mahomet’* and in various other ways in different languages. The word ‘*Maho’* or ‘*Maha’* in Pali and Sanskrit mean Great and Illustrious and ‘*Metta’* means mercy. Therefore ‘Mahomet’ means ‘Great Mercy’.

2. <u>Buddha’s doctrine was Esoteric and Exoteric:</u>

According to Sacred Books of the East, volume 11, pg. *36 Maha-Parinibbana Sutta* chapter 2 verse 32:

"I have preached the truth without making any distinction between exoteric and esoteric doctrine, for in respect of truths, *Ananda*, the *Tathagata* has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher, who keeps something back".

Muhammad (pbuh) on the commandment of Almighty God delivered the message and doctrine without making any distinction between esoteric and exoteric. The Qur'an was recited in public in the days of the Prophet and is being done so till date. The Prophet had strictly forbidden the Muslims from hiding the doctrine

3. Devoted Servitors of the Buddhas:

According to Sacred Books of the East volume 11 pg. 97 Maha-Parinibbana *Sutta* Chapter 5 verse 36:

"Then the Blessed one addressed the brethren, and said, 'Whosoever, brethren have been *Arahat-Buddhas* through the long ages of the past, they were servitors just as devoted to those Blessed ones as Ananda has been to me. And whosoever brethren shall be the *Arahat-Buddhas* of the future, there shall be servitors as devoted to those Blessed ones as Ananda has been to me'."

The Servitor of Buddha was Ananda. Muhammad (pbuh) also had a servitor by the name Anas (r.a.) who was the son of Malik. Anas (r.a...) was presented to the Prophet by his parents. Anas (r.a...) relates: "My mother said to him, 'Oh Messenger of God, here is your little servant'." Further Anas relates, "I served him from the time I was 8 years old and the Prophet

called me his son and his little beloved". Anas (r.a...) stayed by the Prophet in peace and in war, in safety as well as in danger till the end of his life.

i) Anas (r.a.), even though he was only 11 years old stayed beside the Prophet during the battle of Uhud where the Prophet’s life was in great danger.

ii) Even during the battle of Honain when the Prophet was surrounded by the enemies who were archers, Anas (r.a...) who was only 16 years old stood by the Prophet.

Anas (R) can surely be compared with Ananda who stood by Gautam Buddha when the mad elephant approached him.

4. **Six Criteria for Identifying Buddha:**

According to the Gospel of Buddha by Carus pg. 214:

"The Blessed one said, ‘There are two occasions on which a *Tathagata’s* appearance becomes clear and exceedingly bright. In the night Ananda, in which a *Tathagata* attains to the supreme and perfect insight, and in the night in which he passes finally away in that ultra passing which leaves nothing whatever of his earthly

existence to remain.’ "

According to Gautam Buddha, following are the six criteria for identifying a Buddha.

i) A Buddha attains supreme and perfect insight at night-time.

ii) On the occasion of his complete enlightenment he looks exceedingly bright

iii) A Buddha dies a natural death.

iv) He dies at night-time.

v) He looks exceedingly bright before his death.

vi) After his death a Buddha ceases to exist on earth.

i) Muhammad (pbuh) attained supreme insight and Prophethood at night-time.

According to Surah Dukhan:

"By the books that makes thing clear – We sent it down during a blessed night."
[Al-Qur'an 44:2-3]

According to Surah Al-Qadar:

"We have indeed revealed this (message) in the night of power."
[Al-Qur'an 97:1]

ii) Muhammad (pbuh) instantly felt his understanding illumined with celestial light.

iii) Muhammad (pbuh) died a natural death.

iv) According to Ayesha (r.a.), Muhammad (pbuh) expired at night-time. When he was dying there was no oil in the lamp and his wife Ayesha (r.a.) had to borrow oil for the lamp.

v) According to Anas (r.a.), Muhammad (pbuh) looked exceedingly bright in the night of his death.

vi) After the burial of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) he was never seen again in his bodily form on this earth.

5. **Buddhas are only Preachers:**

According to Dhammapada, Sacred Books of East volume 10 pg., 67:

"The *Jathagatas* (Buddhas) are only Preachers."
The Qur'an says in Surah Ghashiya:
"Therefore do thou give admonition, for thou art one to admonish. Thou art not one to manage (men's) affairs."
[Al-Qur'an 88:21-22]

6. **Identification of *Maitreya* by *Buddha*:**

According to *Dhammapada*, *Mattaya Sutta*, 151:

"The promised one will be:

i) Compassionate for the whole creation

ii) A messenger of peace, a peace-maker

iii) The most successful in the world.

The Maitreya as a Preacher of morals will be:

i) Truthful

ii) Self-respecting

iii) Gentle and noble

iv) Not proud

v) As a king to creatures

vi) An example to others in deeds and in words".